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ABSTRACT

Learning to read is a complex process and necessitates continuity in the school environment -- the factor of primary concern in this study. Three objectives are noted: (1) to determine differences in reading achievement between fifth grade pupils who have been in the same school since the third grade (non-mobile), and those fifth grade pupils who enter the school any time after the third grade (mobile); (2) to determine differences in the percentage of non-mobile and mobile pupils achieving at or above grade norm; and, (3) to determine if the differences are present regardless of ethnicity and socioeconomic background. Results obtained from scores on the Reading Metropolitan Achievement Tests indicate that there is higher reading achievement in non-mobile pupils, as compared with mobile pupils. A higher percentage of non-mobile pupils are reading at or above grade norm than the mobile pupils. Both findings apply to both Title I and non-Title I districts, but the magnitude of the mean difference in favor of the non-mobile group is greater for the non-Title I districts. All mean and percentage differences are statistically significant. (Author/AM)

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THE EFFECT OF CONTINUITY OF SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT ON READING ACHIEVEMENT OF FIFTH GRADE PUPILS

by

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The Effect of Continuity of School Environment on Reading Achievement of Fifth Grade Pupils

Problem: In view of the recent emphasis on accountability in education and the measurement of accountability in education, one of the factors felt to be of primary concern was the factor of school environment in the learning process.

Purpose: Many factors affecting reading achievement of pupils have been studied, for example, the psychological, social, intellectual and the familial. While these factors are important and should continue to be studied, there should be some attention given to the degree and extent of the influence of the continuity of the school environment on the learning process. The need for such a study may be highly relevant in view of the fact that learning to read is a complex process and necessitates the need for continuity in school environment.

In addition, in reporting reading achievement results by school, district, or city, the factor of continuity of school environment is generally not taken into account at any particular grade level or combination of grade levels.

Objective:

1. To ascertain if there is a difference in reading achievement between fifth grade pupils who have been in the same school since the third grade (non-mobile) as compared with those fifth grade pupils who entered the school at any time after the third grade. (mobile)

2. To ascertain if there is a difference in "the percentage of pupils achieving at or above grade norm" between fifth grade pupils who have been in the same school since the third grade (non-mobile) as compared with those fifth grade pupils who entered the school at any time after the third grade. (mobile)

3. If there are differences, are these differences demonstrated regardless of ethnicity and socio-economic background.

Methodology: In April 1971 and April 1973, as part of the New York City Annual Reading Survey, the Metropolitan Reading Achievement Tests were administered to pupils in grades two through six. By using the third grade class lists of April 1971 and the fifth grade class lists of April 1973, the non-mobile group in each school was identified and those pupils who had not taken the reading test at the third grade were considered to be "mobile" for the purpose of this study.

The Mean "Total Reading Grade Score" of both non-mobile and mobile fifth grade pupils were compared with grade norm.

Mean "Total Reading Grade Score" differences were ascertained between non-mobile and mobile fifth grade pupils.

"Percentages of Pupils Achieving At or Above Grade Norm" were ascertained for non-mobile and mobile fifth grade pupils.

Re: Effect of Continuity of School Environment
on Reading Achievement of 5th Grade Pupils

Population: Fifth Grade Pupils in 10 Representative Community School Districts, School Year 1972-73 (Five Title I Districts; Five non-Title I Districts)

	No. of Schools	No. of Pupils	Percent non-mobile	Ethnic Composition Hispanic	Non-Hispanic Black	Non-Hispanic White	Percent of Pupils on "Free Lunch"
Title I	84	13,289	48.9	36.6	58.0	5.4	72.2
Non-Title I	101	11,748	64.3	10.1	24.6	65.3	29.0

Findings: In all 10 districts combined, fifth grade pupils in the same school since the third grade were reading at a higher level than those fifth grade pupils who entered the school after the third grade. The non-mobile group was reading at one school month (-.1) below grade norm, (5.7), whereas the mobile group was reading 1.2 school years (-1.2) below grade norm (5.7), a mean difference of 1.1 school years in favor of the non-mobile group.

A higher percentage of non-mobile fifth grade pupils were reading at or above grade norm (5.7) than mobile fifth grade pupils. 45.2% of the non-mobile group as compared with 21.6% of the mobile group was reading at or above grade norm. The difference of 23.6% in favor of the non-mobile group was statistically significant at less than the .01 level of significance.

In the five Title I districts the non-mobile group was reading at a higher level than the mobile group. The non-mobile group was reading eight school months (-.8) below grade norm (5.7), whereas the mobile group was reading 1.5 school years (-1.5) below grade norm (5.7), a difference of seven school months (.7 of a school year) in favor of the non-mobile group. The mean differences in favor of the non-mobile group among all five districts ranged from seven to eight school months and were statistically significant at less than the .01 level of significance.

A higher percentage of non-mobile fifth grade pupils were reading at or above grade norm (5.7) than mobile fifth grade pupils. 28.7% of the non-mobile group as compared with 14.0% of the mobile group was reading at or above grade norm. The difference of 14.7% in favor of the non-mobile group was statistically significant. The percentage differences in favor of the non-mobile group among all five districts ranged from 12.0% to 17.1% and were statistically significant at less than the .05 level of significance.

Findings: (Con't.)

In the five non-Title I districts, the non-mobile group was reading at a higher level than the mobile group. The non-mobile group was reading four school months (4.4) above grade norm (5.7), whereas the mobile group was reading seven school months (-.7) below grade norm (5.7), a difference of 1.1 school years in favor of the non-mobile group. The mean differences in favor of the non-mobile group among all five districts ranged from eight school months to 1.3 school years and were statistically significant at less than the .01 level.

A higher percentage of non-mobile fifth grade pupils were reading at or above grade norm (5.7) than mobile fifth grade pupils. 59.4% of the non-mobile group as compared with 33.8% of the mobile group was reading at or above grade norm. (5.7) The difference of 25.6% in favor of the non-mobile group was statistically significant. The percentage differences in favor of the non-mobile group among all five districts ranged from 18.1% to 30.8% and were statistically significant at less than the .01 level of significance.

Conclusions:

1. There is higher reading achievement demonstrated by fifth grade non-mobile pupils over fifth grade mobile pupils. This applies to both Title I and non-Title I districts, but the magnitude of the mean differences in favor of the non-mobile group is greater for the non-Title I districts. All mean differences were statistically significant.

2. A higher percentage of fifth grade non-mobile pupils were reading at or above grade norm than fifth grade mobile pupils. This applies to both Title I and non-Title I districts, but the magnitude of the percentage differences in favor of the non-mobile group is greater for the non-Title I districts. All percentage differences were statistically significant.

DIFFERENTIAL READING ACHIEVEMENT AMONG FIFTH GRADE PUPILS APRIL 1973 --- BY DISTRICT

District	No. of Schools	Non-Mobile Mean	Non-Mobile Mean Norm Diff.	Mobile Mean	Mobile Mean Norm Diff.	Mean Diff.	Percentage of Pupils Achieving at or above Grade Norm (5.7) Non-Mobile	Mobile	Per Cent Diff.
					TITLE I				
A	17	4.7	-1.0	3.9	-1.8	+ .8	21.1	9.1	12.0
B	16	4.8	- .9	4.1	-1.6	+ .7	25.9	12.3	13.6
C	17	5.0	- .7	4.3	-1.4	+ .7	31.1	14.0	17.1
D	21	5.0	- .7	4.3	-1.4	+ .7	30.6	15.2	15.4
E	13	5.1	- .6	4.4	-1.3	+ .7	32.7	17.5	15.2
Total	84	4.9	- .8	4.2	-1.5	+ .7	28.7	14.0	~~15.2~~ 14.7
					NON-TITLE I				
F	13	6.1	+ .4	4.8	- .9	+1.3	57.1	26.3	30.8
G	22	5.9	+ .2	5.1	- .6	+ .8	53.3	35.2	18.1
H	22	5.9	+ .2	4.8	- .9	+1.1	55.2	28.3	26.9
I	22	6.5	+ .8	5.6	- .1	+ .9	69.1	47.0	22.1
J	22	6.2	+ .5	5.0	- .7	+1.2	59.3	32.1	27.2
Total	101	6.1	+ .4	5.0	- .7	+1.1	59.4	33.8	25.6
All Districts Combined	184	5.6	- .1	4.5	-1.2	+1.1	45.2	21.6	23.6